

Watson on the Spot

Edward W. Watson

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WATSON
ON THE



FIRST EDITION



TEN SHILLINGS

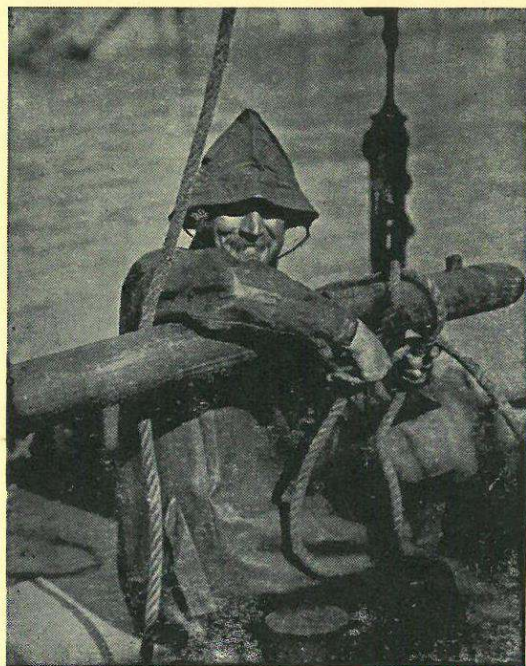
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★ Dedication ★

THIS Book is dedicated to the memory of my dear mother, the late Mrs. Agnes Watson, woman journalist and contributor of "Portia's" weekly column in "The Daily Mail" at Hull, upon which paper my late father served for over a score of years as assistant-editor and leader-writer. She was a great public worker, quietly helping all sorts and conditions of people along the road of life. Wrote short stories as her foot rocked my cradle.

—E. W. WATSON.

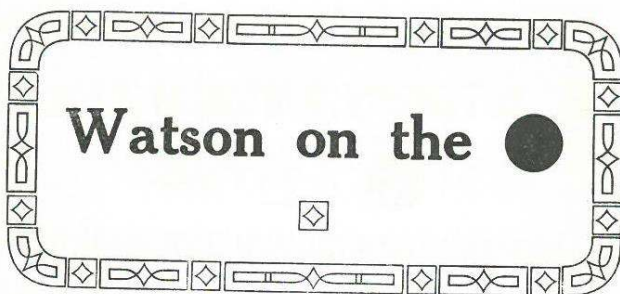


KURT JÄCKEL,
*the German North Sea "lone voyager,"
who was posed by Watson for an exclus-
ive photograph after the adventurer had
committed triple murder on the high seas.*

A TRIPLE MURDERER POSES FOR AN EXCLUSIVE PICTURE

Kurt Jäckell, German sailor, who arrived at Hull Pier one summer evening in a small ketch from Hamburg, told the authorities that he was a lone voyager, crossing the North Sea for a stunt. I boarded his ship and interviewed him alone, in the little cabin. Pointing to the German-made Zeiss Tessar lens on my Graflex, I commented : "German, goot!" He, as a patriotic German, agreed and rewarded me with an exclusive picture, showing him at the tiller when I dressed him up in a sou'wester and an oilskin coat.

It was ultimately established that Jäckell had, in fact, murdered no less than three of his shipmates before crossing the North Sea. Later he was charged at Bow Street, London, with triple murder the on high seas and extradited to Germany.



*The Reminiscences of an opportunist
Yorkshire Journalistic Photographer,
detailing for the first time the immense
amount of Tireless Energy, Patience, Effort
and Trouble that goes into the Presentation
of Picture-news in to-morrow's Newspaper,
studied by the Public at breakfast-time ; how
News Cameramen face up to the constant
Problem of Beating the Clock and Competi-
tion from Rival Newspapers and Agencies.*

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED
BY THE AUTHOR

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IF YOU are alert, an opportunist, keen, putting your work before anything else, carrying your camera with you always, then you are likely to become a first-class journalistic photographer. Believe in yourself, do not hesitate in making your decisions, do not allow other people to put you off the task you have in front of you and you will succeed, providing you work hard.

Remember that it is the man behind the camera who counts. The mere possession of an expensive camera—Graflex, Speed Graphic, Leica or Contax—will not make you into an ace cameraman. This does not mean that you will not require a reliable, top-notch outfit for your work. The names of Graflex or Speed Graphic mean, no doubt, a lot to the aspiring Press photographer of to-day, but did not come

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ready-made to me as a newspaper photographer of forty years ago. A young Yorkshireman, son of highly respected journalistic parents, I had to find things out for myself and to discover the virtues of the Graflex gradually for at that time this series of cameras was not extensively advertised and sold in this country.

I suppose I was one of the first Englishmen to appreciate and use these cameras and now I am, perhaps Europe's greatest Graflex enthusiast, for I own and use more Graflex and Speed Graphic American-made cameras than any other photographer I have met. Like the man in the famous advertisement for Pear's soap, I have no desire to use any other. I may be old-fashioned and possibly reactionary, but I am definitely not a miniature enthusiast. It is Graflex all the way with me.

The working proprietor of the East Yorkshire Press Service, formerly styled "Watson's Pictorial Press," I feel certain that I can interest young and old, professional and amateur photographers and also the general public by a selection of my many remarkable and sometimes highly amusing experiences and escapades.

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An I began taking photographs in
Early 1905, at ten years of age, using
Start a second-hand 5 x 4 "Bullseye"
Kodak, bought for five "bob"
off a market junk stall. Soon dissatisfied, I
removed the meniscus lens and fitted instead
an extra rapid aplanat in a front shutter, cost-
ing three half-crowns. I took various pictures
and sometimes won 5/- prizes in church maga-
zines. From that time, I experimented with a
good deal of success, using various cameras.
These included the German-made Gœrz-An-
schutz, and Minimum-Palmas, both quite
popular among Pressmen. Eventually, and
quite by chance, I struck complete satisfaction
with a Speed Graphic. Second-hand though
it was, it had evidently withstood an amount
of maltreatment before I bought it. I must
confess I almost worshipped it. The fact that
it had double extension, that lenses were fitted
on interchangeable panels and the feature of
the spring-back and built-in focussing screen,
appealed to me tremendously. All these
features and additional ones are still present in
the latest models. I was still at school then

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and, incidentally, did a “roaring” trade in p.o.p. (printing out paper) at “break” among my fellow scholars who pursued a craze of that time, using the sensitized paper in halfpenny cardboard frames holding negatives of famous people. These consisted of badly-made and very “grainy” “copy” negatives, cut down to about two inches square and held in contact by strips of thin, pliable tin.

My first post in journalism “*Scissors and Paste*” was when, on leaving the Hull Grammar School at the age of 15, my dear father, the late Mr. Charles Watson, who was a brilliant descriptive journalist, leader-writer and member of the editorial staff of “The Daily Mail” at Hull, used his influence and got me a job as office boy to then editor, the late Mr. Edgar Samuel Lewis, who kindly said to me “You were evidently very good at essay writing at school and you have taught yourself Pitman’s shorthand, very well then, write me a quarter of a column about the weather!” Courageously, I at once agreed to do so, but, in reality, I felt “bowled” and was in danger of scoring a

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"duck." I went upstairs to my father's empty room where, I well remember, there was a big fire burning. In those days, "The Daily Mail" (not the "Hull Daily Mail" as it is often erroneously referred to to-day) was a first-class evening newspaper with very bright and popular contents indeed. It was published in Whitefriargate down upon which busy thoroughfare I looked. There were many newsboys shouting and a string of horse-drawn carts waiting to rush the "Mail's sporting paper, "The Flash"—what a splendid title—round to the newsagents' shops. Inspired by the scene, I sat down and wrote the story up the best way I could, putting in a slight reference to the weather. Thinking very little of my effort, I timidly took it downstairs into that "holy of holies," the editorial sanctum and handed it to the editor. He told me to leave the "par" with him and go for my lunch. At that time, there was an early edition of the "Mail" called the "Special" and it was printed on pink paper. On returning from lunch, I eagerly searched the pink paper to see if my effort had seen the light of day. At first, I could not find the item

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anywhere and became downhearted. Looking at the paper again, I suddenly came across it set in bourgeois type, actually following my father's leading article on the main page. I was thrilled. My spirits went up instantly and after that, I never looked back.

As the editor's office boy, I was quickly initiated into "scissors and paste" journalism—the art of clipping numerous humorous "pars" and jokes from various English and American periodicals, especially from "Punch." These were picked out by the editor and passed over to me to paste on to sheets of "copy" paper. The great art was to paste them intelligently on the correct side of the cutting. As I read every single one before pasting down, this came quite natural to me and I became so expert that I never seemed to make a mistake and won the editor's approbation. He congratulated me on being the only boy out of the many he had employed who could stick "pars" for the "Mustard and Cress" column on the correct side! This seemed to indicate that young Watson was shaping all right and was soon to become a practical journalist.

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From the editorial sanctum, I *Reporting* was drafted to the reporters' *Days* room. I "covered" "states" (statements to the police), police courts, county court, quarter sessions, brewster sessions, suicides, inquests, garden parties, concerts and open air events which I illustrated with my camera which I always carried with me. At the inquests, I was far too sensitive a boy to go along with the members of the "professional" jury and view the body or to inspect the many anatomical specimens in glass jars behind the scenes. I remember one poor old juror, who used, no doubt, his shilling-a-body remuneration as beer-money, wore a pair of outsize shoes slashed with slots to gain added relief from either gout (from which the coroner himself also suffered) or "beeritis." At an East Riding inquest court, held in a public-house, I was surprised to find on arrival no Press table provided. With abundant confidence, I took up my position at the same table as the coroner. The "windy" police sergeant attending the inquest objected, but I refused to budge. The coroner, bluff Sir Luke White, when informed

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of the matter by the interfering sergeant, at once remarked, "Let him be!" (East Yorkshire for "Leave him alone.")

*Becoming a
Full-Blown
Reporter*

One winter's night, the chief reporter "marked" me for Hornsea Urban District Council, a "must" because the editor resided at this East Yorkshire coastal resort and it was the practice for the reporter's "copy" to be sent to the editor himself to be sub-edited instead of through the usual sub-editorial channels. The meeting was timed to begin at 8 p.m. and I had to get my report written up the same night, ready to hand to the editor at 9 a.m. next morning. With a big sheaf of nice copy-paper, I set off on the train for the seaside meeting. I had in my pocket, apart from my fare, a bare half-crown. The meeting started peacefully enough but soon there was a right rumpus and some of the councillors nearly came to blows. Old "Chris." Pickering, a well-known trawler owner, self-made man and public benefactor, directly spoken and straight-from-the-shoulder, declared to another member : "Sit down when

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your'e beat! Don't snarl like a dog!" Well, I whipped the whole string of abuse on both sides down in shorthand, thinking I had secured some first-class "copy." On leaving the meeting, I made tracks for the station, calling at an hotel in the vicinity. Here, I churned out, invigorated by a pint of bitter beer for which I tendered my half-crown, a copious, if startling column report of the whole local pantomime. I read it through, "subbed" it (in those days the rule was for reporters to give their reports a preliminary sub-editing) and with five minutes in hand to catch the last train, supped off the well-earned pint. Imagine my surprise and indignation when, next day I saw that my more experienced editor had blue pencilled out all the abusive remarks, robbing the report of its colour but proving the wisdom of that famous editorial maxim, "When in doubt, leave out!"

By this time, I would be 17 or so, and my average output would be a column a day, seven days a week, and my wages were 7/6d. a week, but the point was that I was getting the chance of learning, and I appreciated this opportunity. I was exceptionally keen and on I plodded.

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One day, I plucked up courage to inform the editor that it was my intention to leave the "Mail" in order to start up on my own account as a free-lance journalistic photographer. He was greatly distressed at my decision, because he was fond of me and he offered me a chance to go into the "Times" room as a sub-editor. This was the weekly, and the post would mean a sit-down job, but this did not appeal to my creative, imaginative mind. In the end, we agreed that I should receive a five shilling reproduction fee for every photograph chosen, my expenses to be borne by myself, and all the pictures had to be exclusive to the "Mail," but I could send my photographs to any paper in the whole wide world, once they had been published in the pages of the "Mail."

This was, by the way, long after the days of my old friend, Mr. Edgar Marsh, cartoonist-photographer on the "Mail" before I joined the staff. His one and only camera consisted of a guinea Klito, a magazine type. Very often, it would let him down badly at events by all the plates dropping into the bottom or "well" of the camera together instead of one at a time.

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It was nothing to Mr. Marsh to have to keep the mayor or some other notabilities in a civic group waiting ten minutes to a quarter of an hour while he dashed back to his darkroom at the newspaper office to re-adjust the fallen plates in this magazine camera, put matters right and try again. Everybody was so kind!

My very first pictures, were
My First Publications published, I forgot to mention, when I was about 12 years old.

One was of Antwerp cathedral taken with my "Bullseye" Kodak, referred to previously. This "masterpiece" (I still have it handy) illustrated a short original article which I wrote on the subject of a brief holiday in Belgium in "The Hullensian," the magazine of the Hull Grammar School, at which ancient institution Andrew Marvell and William Wilberforce, emancipator of negro slavery, were at one time scholars. Other pictures taken with my "Bullseye" Kodak which scored bullseyes were the one depicting, with perfect composition, two high-and-dry coal boats at Strachur pier at Loch Fyne, copied by my artist aunt as a water-colour ; the other of Loch Fyne itself.

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Then, in 1914, came the outbreak of the first Great War, when I was barely 19. *"You're in the Flying Corps NOW, lad!"* There was a tremendous wave of patriotism. Every able-bodied man enlisted in the Forces in one branch or another. Careers, jobs, one-man businesses like mine, were thrown up and simply did not count. Everything civilian was a luxury. If a lad did not join up, he was promptly shunned by his fellow citizens. I wanted to become an official photographer and I wrote to the Admiralty. I received a reply telling me to join up an ordinary seaman! Soon, came the Lord Derby scheme, under which men and boys enlisted first and then claimed exemption which was never granted because the scheme was a bit of a "twist," to put it mildly. I innocently enough joined up in the Navy under it and was given an armlet with an anchor upon it. This was at York and most of the batch of recruits to which I belonged, after being officially assured by a sergeant of marines that we had just taken the most important and satisfactory step in our lives, ended up, drinking after "time"

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in a low, ancient "pub." While awaiting call-up, I received the tip that the Royal Flying Corps were enlisting a few picked photographers for ærial work. The more I thought about it, the more I was determined to "get in." I wrote up to Captain Campbell who was organizing recruitment and he fixed me up with an interview in London with a view to my special enlistment. I paid my own fare and armed with my camera (taken in case of a test) and a batch of sample prints, I arrived and was finally accepted, the officer arranging, on the telephone, with the Admiralty about my transfer. I was examined by five doctors, who had me running round the room in a ring, naked something like a circus pony, without harness. I was delighted, jubilantly keen. My country wanted me, and what was more had got me!

Shortly afterwards, being called up, I soon realised what it meant to be actually in the flying corps. Then, I found myself posted to France without embarkation leave and where I served until the end in 1918. One bullying flight-sergeant at South Farnborough asked a recruit what his trade was? The lad (it was me)

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proudly replied that he was a photographer, to which the n.c.o. sarcastically sneered : "That isn't a trade, it's a b———— disease!" Nothing daunted by vulgar abuse and irritation, more prevalent at the camps or squadrons in England, we had to work hard in those pioneer days of ærial photography. It was very often necessary to work well into the night to get prints produced in time to ensure their delivery "up the line" to the infantry units before dawn. Aerial photography, which played such an important part in the conduct of the war, was no longer in its infancy and the staffs of the photographic sections were being increased very rapidly, even the infantry being "combed out" for photographers and alleged "mug-fakers" or any man having any claim to photography.

These were the days of
Wratten M's & Pyro-Metol Wratten M plates and pyro-metol developer. I am sure that "p.m." is an excellent developer, if used properly and intelligently. I enjoyed an excellent reputation in the section as a developer of plates and I developed hundreds of ultra-important plates on

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the Somme and Ypres fronts, including those first pictures of the famous Hindenburg Line. The official R.F.C. pyro-metol developer was, in my opinion, too concentrated, if used "neat" to get first-class "soft," but not too "soft" negatives for printing by enlarging. Further, I was sure its formula was, at any rate, almost the same as the well-known Ilford one. This was all right for making the best of action football in Fleet Street darkrooms, but not for aerial exposures on steep gradation plates like the Wratten M. I preferred the famous Imperial Standard developer, because I had used it in my civilian work when I generally diluted it with an equal volume of water. Anxious to get the best results, I risked a serious "telling off" by using my own pet pyro-metol developer. I found it much more satisfactory especially when diluted and with a consequently longer development time. This resulted in a "softer" negative with more detail in the roads, etc. Other squadron's photographic sections could not understand why our negatives were superior. I dare not reveal the reason why, fearing disciplinary action. I used to keep the official

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R.F.C. developer in two old rum jars well to the front, ready for any arguments, but all the time I had another couple of jars containing my own "juice" carefully concealed. I also had up my sleeve a German formula of a plain metol nature. As might be expected, this gave great detail and "soft" results.

I was doing a "spot" of rifle drill one afternoon, when I had the misfortune to trip over a stone. The sergeant-major was cursing me for my alleged clumsiness in falling down, when up came a clerk with the instruction that I should parade in full marching order, together with my "pal" in half-an-hour. The incident put "paid" to the blaspheming sergeant-major luckily for me! Awaiting instructions outside the squadron-office, a Leyland lorry, I noticed a civilian figure in baggy trousers, surrounded by a large group of high-ranking officers. One of these "brass-hats" I recognised as Ernest Brooks, who was taking official photographs. They were looking round the ærodrome, and I immediately recognised Lord Asquith in the

concertina pants. I stood to attention as the official entourage of "eye-washers" passed, not knowing to give the "present" or not! Now I had had the privilege of seeing Lloyd George and the King of Montenegro pass the aerodrome in cars, but I never expected to see Asquith.

"Heads" in any military organization never in any circumstances give rankers any idea of what their plans are, just giving orders. The result was I did not know what was in the wind. Anything might happen and I began to worry. After waiting almost two hours, an officer whom I did not know from Adam, came up, asked me who I was and bid my "pal" and I hug a huge, heavy box, very similar to a coffin and "dump" it into a waiting Crossley tender, the forerunner of the jeep. The strange officer got in the front seat and bade us get in at the back. Singularly incommunicative, the officer took us on mile upon mile. It was, however to me an interesting journey and, peeping through the curtain flaps, we observed many things, including a coterie of German officer prisoners, complete with shaven heads and still wearing their monocles. We finally came to a halt in a farm

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yard, where the officer led the way to a double cellar. On the earth floor, hundreds of beetles crawled among some seed potatoes. "Get rid of these," he ordered curtly. "You'll start a new photographic section here; your stores will be here in the morning. Good night!" And that was that! He took the coffin-shaped box away with him, but not before we had discovered it contained a huge long focus oblique camera, home-made by the R.F.C., to accommodate a massive French lens. We were hungry and, tired out, we slept among the hay in the loft. Eventually, a motor cyclist located us, and I was taken to an ærodrome, about two kilos away for an interview with a commanding officer. He told me that the squadron was "on the move," the cameras were being flown in the 'planes, there was no time to lose, the pilots would be going up again as soon as they landed and the camera magazines would have to be loaded immediately. The machines would take an hour to get their height and be another hour away. I had just two hours to get the section started, develop plates and produce prints! These orders seemed fantastic and

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practically impossible to carry out, but I kept my head. By the time I got back, the full stores for a photographic section had arrived. We broke open the packing cases with our bare fists and, squatted in the cellar's gloom, among the beetles, I loaded, under cover of two great coats, fifty Wratten M plates, risking fogging. I jumped into an awaiting sidecar, grasping the plate magazines ready to put on the cameras in the waiting 'planes. I now realised that this was the Somme offensive and that I was there, on the spot. In the two hours we had at our disposal, we worked, with some help, like electrified scene-shifters. We transformed the cellar into a first-class photographic section, making benches with "scrounged" timber, rigging up the enlarger and its acetylene illuminant, in one big rush. The exposed plates back, they were tank-developed with "Tabloid" products, Imperial pyro-metol ("Standard") formula, dissolved in horse-pond water with red bugs in it. The "negs" were outstandingly excellent! We ascertained, by this time, that we at La Roselle Farm, not far off British H.Q. Soon the new section was packed with enthusiastic staff

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officers examining print after print keenly, as fast as we could do them. One chief thought that promotion was deserved, but it never came my way for, in the middle of the next night, a newly-appointed corporal arrived to take over, he having just sewn his chevrons on his sleeves. We became great "pals" ever after!

Later, just before the war ended, when the Germans were "on the run" we caught up with a deserted German photographic section in a cottage at Lille. Everything had been put into confusion and there were time-bombs and booby-traps everywhere. Now the Germans were cunning and clever, so is their reputation, but it took the painstaking young Yorkshireman, Watson, to rake about in a filthy midden heap of human German dung to find some thrown-away empty plate boxes on which were printed the Hun formulæ for aerial photographic plates. Knowledge was power!

I once was sent up the line near Ypres to fetch an aerial "oblique" camera, brought down in a German plane. It was, as we expected, a beautiful piece of mechanism, fitted with a 20 inch Carl Zeiss Tessar, as big as a dinner-plate.

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On the lens barrel, was a metal band, connected with a mysterious electrical device which I at once guessed was for preventing the condensation on the lens in clouds. This was a new idea which, no doubt, was promptly taken up. I suggested using this remarkable camera as soon as we could get the Continental-sized plates necessary for it from Messrs. Ilford.

Visiting a photographic section one day, that great soldier, the late General Allenby, remarked to me, "I suppose you chaps are all professional photographers in civilian life!" to which I replied with typical Yorkshire candour, "Yes, Sir, all except the sergeant; his claim to photography is that he used to nail the lids on hypo barrels in a big chemical works!" The distinguished soldier roared with laughter! How I used to hate that sergeant and I am sure he hated me. For one thing, he intensely detested my practice of smoking, off duty, of course, twopenny long panatella cigars from the canteen. The aroma used to annoy him. Only officers, not dogs in the ranks, were entitled to smoke cigars in his view. The fact that I had put in for a commission did not seem to count!

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*Bully Beef
& Pickles
Suppers!*

We all liked the life right enough, but like all good soldiers, we did our share of "grousing" and "moaning."

Always the possessor of a healthy appetite, the midnight suppers allowed us greatly appealed to me. They consisted of "bully" beef ("Fray Bentos") and, believe it or not, pickles. We got so fed up at times with printing away at ærial negatives, verticals and obliques—a good printer could expose and produce a thousand whole-plate prints during one night—that the occasional opportunity of taking a group or "still" photograph of any subject came as a great "treat" and change.

I could, as my readers may well imagine, recall countless experiences of both a serious and a humorous nature during those seemingly endless three years of service on the Somme and Ypres fronts, but I shall only chronicle one at this time, and this because of its humour.

A "rookie" corporal, rather a "posh" sort of a young man, was posted to our section. He affected a monocle and upon arrival from "Blighty," found himself, to quote his own

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words, "fwitefully" hungry. He appealed to me, as one soldier to another, to help him to find something to eat. By that time, I was a proper "old soldier," and, pulling his leg, jokingly informed him that if he went off to the cookhouse and mentioned that he was a fresh photographer, the cooks would look after him and give him some really beautiful pork and beans. He had never heard of such an appetising dish before, and, in great anticipation, with the pangs of hunger within him, he went off to the cookhouse. When I saw him, an hour later, I politely asked him if he had enjoyed his pork and beans. To this query he at once replied, "Yes, I found the beans all right, but I could not find the bally pork!" The joke was that in those somewhat notorious tins of American pork and beans, the pork included was a mere piece of grease the size of a postage stamp.

Coming home from France in 1918, after months without leave, I landed home, covered in lice, was extremely lucky in getting demobilised as a newspaper key man almost at once and became a civilian again.

UPON demobilization, I soon picked up the reins of Press photography again and met with great success. This was through patience, will power and doggedness. I was up against competition from men who had dodged military service and also robbed my connection. Despite these circumstances, I kept keeping on and on merit and hard work alone, beat my competitors. I spent my modest gratuity on a new enlarger and, in addition to my two Speed Graphics, I invested in a 7 x 5 and half-plate Auto-Graflex which was an excellent camera, indeed. It was admittedly somewhat bulky, but I handled it with ease. I could see exactly what I was taking. Guess-work was avoided and the camera was ideal at dog shows, baby competitions, etc. Later, I purchased a 5 x 4 Tele-Graflex, a 3A Graflex, a 1A Graflex (both for roll films and useful when covering day-to-day events a long way from the darkroom) a postcard-size Speed Graphic and, last but not least in usefulness, if in size, an O Graphic which took vest-pocket films and was fitted with the Graflex shutter.

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The O Graphic, now no longer made, was, in my opinion, one of the most practical and remarkable little cameras ever made. It was fitted with the famous multi-slit Graflex focal-plane shutter running vertically across the focal-plane and 3 inch Cooke 5.6 anastigmat. The size of its pictures was V.P. and there was a 6-exposures film. The camera was fool-proof and was operated by a system of using stops, based on optical laws, no focussing being necessary. It was fitted with a special and remarkable flap silently-opening cover like a winking eye. The iris diaphragm was altered by a particularly clever and cunning yet simple lever device on the top of the instrument, showing the various stops at a glance and without touching the lens. The O Graphic was also fitted with a folding direct vision finder, attached to which was a tiny mirror which could be used for deceptive-angle pictures. Exposures of a 10th. of a second or more could be given in the hand without fear of "camera-shake." I was always very "tickled with this camera and have used it

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on several occasions at special events when the use of a larger camera was "taboo." As a matter of fact, I had a small, wooden platform made by a joiner friend enabling it to be accommodated inside my "bowler" hat which had a small rectangular hole cut out of the crown for the lens to peep through unobserved. This "stunt" was used to take alleged murderers charged at police courts.

During both wars, especially at the beginning of the first, there were, as might be expected, severe restrictions on Press photography. In 1914, before I enlisted and later, photographers at Hull, Yorkshire, from which port I operated my agency, were required to give three whole days' notice before military permits for Press photography could be granted. In the case of a big fire breaking out, a somewhat wooden-headed staff officer calmly informed me that the same three days rule applied! My readers can see, no doubt, that after three days the fire would be burnt out and the "story" as dead as mutton. With all due respect to the authorities, many a time I strolled in leisurely fashion past the sentries with my small, but

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greatly efficient O Graphic camera nestling innocently enough in the interior of a confectionery paper carrier, disguised in a shroud of tissue paper as a dainty cream cake being taken home for tea by a dutiful husband.

Developing on the Road Developing on the road in a motor-car at fast speed was an achievement of no mean importance during the very height of competition in the days when the "Daily Chronicle" with its slip localized editions was published at Leeds. I attributed this success to the use of Eastman flat film. This was how I became the first British Press photographer to abandon heavy glass plates in favour of flat or cut film. My competitors wondered how I did it, but, of course, I did not enlighten them. It proved to be extremely difficult to handle plates when developing on bumpy roads even if tanks were used. I tried it and met with all sorts of trouble—spots, (caused by dust) breakages and all the rest. Speed and quality of result are the most important points when one is operating a Press photographic agency. Like the mile handicap

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at a sports meeting, the competitor who passes the tape first gets the reward. A good photograph might be worth £20 or even £100 one day and not a halfpenny the next! I used to say "True, great skill is required to get just the right incident, to judge distances correctly, to hold the camera steadily, to release the trigger of the camera smoothly and to get life into the picture, but all these are of no avail if the other man's photographs reach the art editor's hands ten minutes before your own."

It was a case of beating the clock and every minute counted. In those days, to develop a film, fix it and give it a short wash, took ten minutes and that ten minutes might mean missing the train to London, Manchester or Leeds. What I had to do was to save that precious period and devise some dependable means of developing the films on the way back from the event to my agency's darkroom, where the wet negatives could be rushed through the enlarger and prints made for London, Leeds and Manchester. I tried changing bags and alleged portable darkrooms of one sort and another. They all fell short of being really

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practical. Their shortcomings led to my invention of a combined developing cabinet and operating or exposing stand. It was entirely my own idea, served me excellently and thoroughly justified its moderate cost. The top of the cabinet had a small platform, covered with a ribbed rubber mat, bought in Woolworth's sixpenny store. On this, I could stand, armed with Graflex or Speed Graphic, to secure elevated pictures of sections of processions, crowds etc., and it was, moreover, very easily reached by means of rungs made of wooden strips on the sloping sides of the cabinet. No other photographer, however "cheeky," could "pinch" a duplicate exposure from the same viewpoint as the cabinet was, of course, in my own car. To develop, the doors of the cabinet were thrown back and secured with catches. The Kodak safelight, connected to an extra car battery, was switched on and the teak developing tanks with their floating lids, used to prevent oxidization of the developer and fixing solutions, brought into use. We used mostly fast orthochromatic films for Press work at that time—panchromatic films were used for technical and com-

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mercial work. The operator next enveloped himself in a spacious black bag which he entered head first, rather like putting on a big shirt. The sides of the bag were fastened to the inner walls of the cabinet. In comparative ease, considering his task, he soon developed the films, loading each one into a drop-in perforated holder in the orthodox Kodak way. An electric immersion-heater, operated from the same accumulator as the safelight, an Eastman timing clock, a thermometer, a small shelf to put the emptied dark-slides on, a ruby-glass covered periscope to observe one's proximity to the journey's end and, finally a speaking-tube with whistle to enable a conversation with the driver, completed the mobile developing outfit which was a great, unexcelled time-saver. Incidentally, I might mention that the darkroom cabinet was not a fixture, being quite portable, so that my family could enjoy the pleasures of motoring on Sundays, or at any other times when I was not actually "on duty" which was, I must admit, not very often. Readers, please remember this invention was created long before the B.B.C. recording vans were ever seen on the roads.

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Hollywood's Conception of Cameramen! Through Hollywood, the innocent British and world publics are getting, in my opinion, an entirely false impression of the professional Press photographer who is invariably shown as an impudent, privileged, almost black-mailing rascal who "flashes" his helpless victims in unguarded moments. He throws his used bulbs all over the place, for some amazing reason almost always drops on one knee and becomes a general nuisance. If it is a court scene, he and his rivals are "let in" like a herd of cattle. This may be only the screen version, but if this is how photographic journalists actually behave in American real life, then it certainly is not the way British photographers carried on in my day. Most genuine Press photographers in this country are, in reality, quiet, unassuming men, noted for the sense of decency, sympathy and understanding of all classes of people. This American film version of the conduct of newspapermen does not entertain anyone and, in my opinion, should be ended because it does a lot of harm to an honourable calling.

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Truly has it been said
Newspapers that newspapers shape the
shape the world and in all the things
World! produced by man, there is
nothing more marvellous
than the day's newspaper. Certainly, the
whole world clamours, day in and day out, for
news and picture-news with a voice that rises
to a crescendo in times of crisis. The pictorial
side of modern journalism is undoubtedly one
of its most important features. Lord Hewart
once wrote that men spoke of the ingratitude of
dictators and democracies. Was there nothing
to be said, he asked, of the ingratitude of
readers? Did they not tend to take too much
for granted and think with too little thankful-
ness—if they thought at all—of the skill and
judgment, the labour and the pains, the dis-
crimination, the restraint and the enterprise
withal which, with perfect regularity, and punct-
uality, day by day and almost hour by hour,
exhibit the glittering panorama of the world
before our too careless eyes? To which port-
ion of their newspapers did the majority of
readers turn first? It was the picture page!

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A Race against Time Young and old appreciate news pictures. The photographic reproduction of any scene or incident in the day's news conveyed more at a glance than what many lines of descriptive writing, however brilliantly penned, could merely suggest. All over the world, there are men on the alert with their Graflex or Speed Graphic cameras ready to photograph that scene, bringing events, large or small vividly before your eyes in the newspaper. Have you ever thought, for a moment, what a race against time the production of the picture-page meant? Art editors never found any difficulty in "filling up." The reverse was the case. In reality, competition in the Press illustration world was, in my day, very keen indeed. Speed, also, was a vital factor in the preparation for publication of news photographs. The Press photographer of those days had not only to beat the other man, but, worse still, he had to beat the clock. The publication of Press photographic "scoops" was only made possible by the last word in organization, preparation and secrecy, from beginning to end.

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Even then, it was by no means certain that information would not reach the opposition by some means or other. The Press cameraman of yesterday, (whatever he is to-day) was not merely a taker of photographs, he was a journalist and an opportunist with a big "nose" for picture-news, not content to run at the heels of a reporter. He might go out to take pictures of a big society wedding and return with a "mixed bag." On his way back to his office, he might come across a huge fire, an overturned bus, a burst water main, a buildings collapse, anything, everything. He must be as quick on the "draw" as any screen cowboy. Press photographic jobs, in my day, were not easy ones. It was my duty to secure photographs for my papers or agencies (and that in the long run meant the actual public) no matter how distasteful or difficult the task might be. I remember at a Hull (Yorkshire) railway disaster I was threatened with arrest for not helping with the injured and the threat came from a railway police superintendent with whom I was normally very friendly. He had, unfortunately, "lost his head" for the time being.

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High-Speed Enterprise Rarely has high-speed enterprise in newspaper production been so strikingly demonstrated as in the case of the exclusive "Doric" pictures which the "Daily Mail" (London and Manchester) in co-operation with Mr. Hubert Scott-Paine, the famous motor-boat designer and racer, was once able to present to its readers. The pictures were in the Orient liner, "Orion" and the problem was how to get them to London hours before the vessel berthed. Mr. Scott-Paine volunteered to try to locate the ship in one of his speed-boats. With only approximate indications of the "Orion's" position, he searched a large area of the English Channel in failing light. Travelling quickly, he located her after two hours, retrieved the pictures which were cast overboard in a small, floating barrel and then dashed back at high-speed in heavy seas. At that time, the achievement of Mr. Scott-Paine and his speed-boat suggested interesting and varied possibilities for the use of such a craft. Personally, I should have thought twice before pitching exclusive films into the sea, but

nothing ventured, nothing done and in Press photographic enterprises there is an element of risk. Why was this race against time necessitated? Largely because of keen competition between newspapers and also owing to an impatient public's demand to see the pictures in the paper the next day and, in the case of an evening paper, the very same day on which they were taken.

What is the history of Press photography in England? In the latter part of the last century, before the days of Press photographs half-tone process blocks and picture-pages, editors employed imaginative artists to draw the scenes of disasters and other events. These individuals collected all the available data connected with the occurrence from various sources relating to the event and drew their conception of what had happened. These illustrations were remarkably realistic, but it generally took some few days before they could be published. Many people have still in their possession pictures of this kind in musty old volumes of the

"Illustrated London News" to be seen now and then on second-hand bookstalls in the market-places. Up to recently, if no longer, there was published a rather gruesome, crude weekly in which appeared vivid sketches of murderers in the actual moment of perpetration. In the early days of Press photography, before my time, there were plenty of "snags." There was, for example, no synchronized electric flashbulbs and operators had to use magnesium powder while lenses and plates were very slow. Also, just after the turn of the century, negatives were not wet-printed by projection as is the case to-day. The original "snapshots" were necessarily badly under-exposed owing to the lack of speed of lenses and plates. An enlarged negative had to be made from the original one and this had to be "worked up" and improved by an artist-retoucher. Contact prints were then quickly struck off from this new, enlarged negative. All credit is due to these pioneers who worked under the very greatest difficulties. We, of the present generation, have much to be thankful for to these early workers for they got together and formed what

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was known as "The Photographic Copyright Union," originally established under the title of "The Photographic Copyright Union." It had three objects. The first was to watch copyright legislation; the second to foster amicable and profitable relations between photographers and the Press and thirdly its purpose was to assist members in securing their rights in case of infringement of copyright. Its efforts to secure uniformity of action were soon generally and heartily supported. I have mentioned these facts because Press photographers in Great Britain to-day automatically enjoy many of the rights and privileges which these pioneers created and fought for. Until recently, the name of any photographer who took a specially creditable picture was but seldom mentioned in the caption underneath, but, in my younger days, it was customary to put "Photograph by Watson's Pictorial Press, Hull" below the block. About the year 1900, the Copyright Union invariably encouraged, if not insisted upon, its inclusion. Thus the photographer got credit for his work. Just now, both staff and freelance photographers' names are being given.

In Great Britain, in my time, at any rate, it was not practical for news editors to send staff photographers out to cover all the world's events. They must have an increasing supply of news pictures for their needs. This is where the big agencies came in. At that time, it would be no exaggeration to say that practically the whole work of illustrating the large "nationals" published in England rested upon the shoulders of the Fleet Street agencies in London together with a few provincial ones like my own, covering a definite local area. Those agencies—there were about thirty of them—supplied the art editors with an abundance of picture-news every day. They undertook all the risks and faced all the competition, severe indeed. Many of them were of high standing and they all worked on similar lines. At the present time, their activities are greatly curtailed. This is largely due to the newsprint shortage in Great Britain to-day. There are now now no picture-pages in the dailies. The death and funeral of King George VI brought about an exception and the souvenir picture issues

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were sold out at once, bought by a public demanding pictures of the last scenes in the passing of a much-beloved monarch, respected by all photographers for his extreme kindness and consideration at all times. Television? No, television cameras will never supplant the more intimate Press ones in the capable hands of a trained or born journalist, whose pictures will be more intimate and more interesting than "generals" flashed on the television screen for the moment. Press pictures, too, can be more permanent, especially when beautifully reproduced in periodicals like the "Sphere." What the future may bring is a matter for conjecture. Colour, photogravure, or what? None can say. We shall have to do as Mr. Asquith once said, "Wait and see!"

I may recall that an experiment was in progress between the largest of the agencies and one of the daily picture papers, in furtherance of which the newspaper was to pay a lump sum and the agency was to supply its complete service of pictures. I suppose I might have claimed to have been ahead of Fleet Street (was it possible) in this connection for, as a matter of

fact, I had entered, years before this, into an arrangement on identical lines, with the editor of my old paper, "The Daily Mail," at Hull, then one of the most influential and prosperous evening papers in the country and owned by the Grotrian family. The mutual advantage was that the agency had a steady income which simplified its financial affairs and let it budget for the future with confidence and, on the other hand, the newspaper secured an assurance as definite as possible that no pictures would be "missed" and that it would not only have the picture service of the agency, but also receive its allegiance as a result of which greater efforts might be expected in the search for picture-news. Otherwise, the agencies did everything on a speculative basis. Art editors did not care how much an agency spent on getting pictures. They demanded print inspection first. This was rather remarkable, because it meant much waste. The reason was the fierce competition. The art editors were afraid they "missed" anything and, in any case, the proportion of pictures they used was only small. At that time, it was a fact that a first-class

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Press photographic agency might then show art editors as many as 150 pictures in a day, 120 of them being thrown out. Yet the output in standard and quality had to be maintained without any falling off of effort or enthusiasm. Then came a period when things were not so prosperous with the Press photographic agencies as they once were. The cause of this was that two or three agencies literally forced the pace beyond the power of the remainder to compete. Although staffed by British people and served with competent British photographers, these agencies were managed by Americans who introduced a much wider conception of picture-news responsibility than that which previously existed. They attempted what they termed "one hundred per cent cover" of the world's news. They established branch offices in nearly all the capitals of Europe and correspondentships with many photographers all over the world. They developed ultra-rapid means of transport. At first, they used fast cars and aeroplanes, but dropped them as the "wiring" of photographs became practical. To defend themselves, the older agencies formed an assoc-

iation for the pooling of expenses and the elimination of competition and overlapping. The response of the American agencies was to form themselves into a rival group styled "The British International Photographic Press Agencies." There was, I believe, more internal competition in that group than in the other. Although the agencies with American connections had to be self-supporting, as far as possible, there seemed to be no doubt that the financial advantages of those connections enabled them to over-reach their competitors. The end of this welter of competition was fairly obvious. It meant the eventual emergence of a few big agencies, covering all the big news of the world and using the fastest transport and the finest photographic skill obtainable the world over.

These notes on the London Press photographic agencies would be incomplete without a reference to that pioneer organization, The Topical Press Agency, conducted by that well-known Fleet Street personality, the late "Topsy" Edwards who once strongly advised me in a personal letter not to copy American Press methods and technique, advice which I heeded.

ZEPPELIN raid days brought about several interesting Press photographic experiences. In an early raid, somewhere on the East coast, the "baby-killers," as they were called, missed their target with their bombs and, by what can be best described as a mere "fluke" only managed to kill an innocent chicken, but a few days old. The local police visited the farmyard and took charge of the "body." Getting the tip of this, I scented something of a good "story." The Huns, with all their ghastly reputation for frightfulness, had miserably failed in their murder mission! So off I dashed to the local police station where the dead victim's body lay. Always friendly with the police, I was allowed to photograph the "corpse" with my Graflex. Here was the nucleus of a great "scoop!" I rushed my prints to London and elsewhere and the art editor of one of the big national picture papers rang me up on the trunk telephone to congratulate me on my picture, and especially on the caption, which read, "Zepp.'s only victim!" He added that he was making a front-

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page "splash" of the stunt. Naturally, I was pleased but, unfortunately, the matter did not end there. At that time, a Press Bureau had been officially established to advise on the publication of news and photographs, but its machinery was necessarily so slow, compared with the organization of any of the big newspaper offices, that it sometimes took the greater part of a day to get a "story" duly passed for publication. To combat this delay, the staffs of the various newspapers, in their daily race against time, had an understood method of working which was to the effect that they got news ready set up into type and, in the case of photographs, the blocks engraved in advance. Then the OK or vice-versa sign would be given by the Press Bureau. In this case, I was told later, the front-page block of the chicken had been engraved and, after receiving the OK, the front page had been made up, the stereo plates cast and placed in position on the huge rotary printing presses which began to revolve, printing the provincial edition at high-speed. Then came the urgent word that, after all, the photograph must not, in any circumstances, be pub-

lished. With the signal for engines reversed, as a result of this final instruction, something like chaos followed. The stereo plates had to be whipped off the stopped Hoe presses and melted down, while every single copy of the edition with the chicken's photograph in, had to be burnt. A fresh front-page had to be got together in quick time. Perhaps, after all, the Press Bureau officials were right, because the knowledge that so little damage had been done might have easily encouraged the enemy to try again with his destructive Zeppelin bombs, but the strange thing was that the picture of the deceased chick duly appeared in the Leeds and Manchester-printed papers.

Talking about Zeppelins,
Graflexing I well remember Graflexing
the "Graf" the famous Graf Zeppelin
when the airship flew over
Britain uninvited on what I thought at the time
was a prismatic photographic flight under the
guise of goodwill and flower-dropping over the
German prisoners-of-war graves at Keighley in
the West Riding of Yorkshire. I learned that
the Graf might be expected at Hull sometime

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during the day so I was ready. I had a vague notion, without wishing Count Zeppelin, who was on board, any particular harm, that it was possible, if improbable, that the Graf might come to grief as had the British R38 or ZR2. I was casually glancing at the newspapers at the bookstall at Paragon Station when I saw people rushing outside to the station yard. I doubled after them. There, in all her majesty, just above Hammond's emporium, hovered the silent, giant Zeppelin. In a jiffy, my Graflex was in action and so low was the craft that I could read the words "Graf Zeppelin" on it reversed by the Graflex's mirror on to the top focussing screen. I got a second picture as the dirigible dipped in salute over the Cenotaph. I did very well with these pictures in the entire Press and I immediately sold Mr. Jones, the stores manager, a 12 x 10 enlargement. With a specially-printed showcard, bearing my name on it, it was, within a short time, displayed in the window, constituting an unique advertisement for us both. The enlargement caused such crowds outside the stores that the police had to be called to keep the crowds moving.

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The R38 No photographer, Press,
Airship studio or amateur, secured
Disaster a photograph of the R38
 (or ZR2 as the American
 air authorities were to designate the ill-fated airship when they had taken her over) actually breaking in two over the Humber Estuary. There was a large number of Press photographers awaiting her arrival at Cardington, but they waited in vain. I, however, was lucky enough to be on the scene within a few minutes of the crash which happened one summer evening. I was getting my hair cut in Mackenzie's basement saloon in King Edward Street in Hull. On hearing two distant bangs, I immediately guessed what they meant, and with my hair half cut, doubled to my agency 300 yards away. I grabbed my always-loaded 5 x 4 Tele-Graflex and, opening a drawer, took out my Dallmeyer Dallon telephoto 17-inch equivalent focus lens. In a taxi, I dashed to the Corporation Pier along the dockside, past Posterngate to avoid the crowds rushing down Whitefriargate. Within twenty minutes of the crash happening, I jumped on to a rescue tug

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and was out on the spot on the Humber. In a few minutes, we were approaching the torn, crumpled, silver-hued mass of twisted wreckage and I first exposed several "generals," realising that the wreckage would quickly sink. Then, getting nearer, I got a dramatic "shot" of the rescue men ripping open part of the fabric in search of survivors or dead bodies. I put on the telephoto lens and took the battered rudder, stuck up in the air ludicrously. Even as I "snapped," I visualised Air Ministry experts minutely examining my pictures to find details as to the cause of the disaster. I had not been in the Flying Corps for nothing! I secured a series of extremely interesting, valuable and historical photographs which were subsequently very widely published. The best "general" was used on the contents bill of the "Daily Mirror" with a very coarse-screen block and printed in purple ink. In addition, there was the middle-page "spread." The "Mirror" paid me twenty guineas for the placard picture alone. The tide soon flowed, and, as I anticipated, the R38 soon sank in the brown, muddy, murky waters of the Humber Estuary. I got

back to my agency, where with my dear mother who came to help, I "slogged" at the enlarger knocking out 300 prints before midnight. I asked her to take charge of washing, glazing sorting and copyright rubber-stamping, while I thumped out stacks of typewritten carboned captions which read "Hopeless Dawn Breaks O'er Airmen's River Grave," and so on. The first passenger train left about five o'clock a.m. and I was determined to catch it with at least 50 packets of pictures to every paper in Great Britain. Thanks to Mother's help, I caught the guard's van with a quarter of an hour to spare and I tipped the amazed guard with my last half-crown for him to catch the correct connections at Leeds. "Is this thine an' all?" he asked me, holding up a dripping wet parcel. "Might be fish," I ventured, whereupon he pitched the dripping packet right to the other end of the van. It occurred to me later that it was, possibly, the effort of some rival who had no methyated spirit to dry his prints. It was too late then to worry about it. I then dictated on the telephone telegram after telegram to the art editors to meet the prints. Mindful of the

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American interest in the disaster, due to the fact that the American authorities were on the point of taking the R38 over, I managed to get a big packet of prints away to my American agents, Messrs. Underwood and Underwood, of New York. As a result of my cable, a tug met the parcel from the liner per the purser.

The wreck assumed an entirely different appearance the next morning when only a few girders protruded above the surface of the high water. Scores of Pressmen arrived, but though they hired boats etc., there was little or "nowt" to photograph and a ban was put up against getting too near the wreck. Air Vice-marshal Vyvian took charge for the Air Ministry and made his headquarters at the Vittoria hotel at the Pier, where I took a picture of him chatting with no less a personality than Commander Byrd, the American airman, who was, if my memory serves me correctly, to have been on board the ill-fated R38, but missed the train for Hull from London. Since those days, Byrd made for himself, I believe, a distinguished career in the Antarctic. He certainly was very lucky in missing that train!

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At Hull, one of the most outstanding events during the first World War was the sad homecoming of the victims of the British Submarine E13 disaster. As a ceremonial, perhaps nothing has ever taken place in the Third Port comparable with the scene at Paragon Station of the homecoming of the dead crew whose vessel had been fired on by the Germans when stranded off the Danish coast. Their bodies, twelve in number, were placed aboard the s. s. Vidar, at Copenhagen, and brought to the Hull Riverside Quay, one evening. There was an absurd military ban on photography in the vicinity of the Riverside Quay, but permits were granted for camera work at the funeral ceremony which took place the next morning, a Saturday. As a mark of sympathy with Britain, at the loss of these brave sailors, the Danes had encased their bodies in magnificent caskets and a space in the Vidar had been converted into a chapel ardente. Surrounding the caskets, were masses of beautiful flowers. Each casket bore the name of the dead seaman, and the Danes

had thoughtfully constructed a wooden slope, inside the hold of the ship, so that the caskets could be easily brought right out without necessitating their being hauled out of the hold by a crane.

On the following morning, the caskets were borne with full naval ceremony through the city's streets. There was an imposing party of Royal Marines lining the route to the station and a most striking ceremonial followed, blue-jackets (some bearded) bearing the dead to the catafalque, adjoining the station. The victims' remains were then entrained to the homes for burial in various parts of Britain.

Owing to the fact that the Danes had made the caskets rather deep, it was found that these would not readily enter the ordinarily-sized hearses, and there was, consequently, a delay. This meant that my rivals from London missed the train back and gave me the opportunity of sending a large batch of finished prints to all the Sunday papers on the next train they returned upon with undeveloped plates. For my caption, I used borrowed words—"And Home They Brought Their Warriors Dead."

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A Famous Antarctic "Scoop" It is a fact that any ordinary amateur "snap," carried about in any person's wallet may be worth quite a lot from a Press point of view.

Further, if that picture is important enough, it is quite immaterial if the picture is even out of focus or blurred. Take, for example, one of my most famous "scoops," the Captain Scott Antarctic Disaster, pulled off without the aid of any expensive or "posh" camera. This is how the "scoop" happened. A friend introduced me to a young Hull officer, a relative, who had just returned from the Scott expedition in the Antarctic. Now Herbert Ponting, famous as official photographer to the expedition, had evidently generously allowed his fellow-officer to take a few "snaps" at the same time as he was taking his official photographs. That might have raised a question of copyright. If two, or even half a dozen photographers take photographs of the same subject and even from the same angle, then each photographer possesses the copyright of his own photographs. The result is that you have a number of similar

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photographs with the copyright belonging to each of several photographers. As an experienced journalist, I could see great possibilities for these amateur "snaps," taken with the lieutenant's small Kodak and processed by a local chemist. He took them from his wallet and presented them to me, saying that I could publish them in any way I cared. That was, indeed, generous and I thanked him, promising to return the originals undamaged. Immediately I made copy negatives and rushed them to the pioneer agency, Topical, who knew how to deal with such a "scoop." They were almost priceless! One depicted Captain Scott looking through a telescope and, in view of the fact that the intrepid explorer lost his life in the Antarctic, this, probably the last picture taken of him, became of great importance. There was one of the Terra Nova in the ice and so on.

The pictures were published all over the wide world. Special Scott memorial numbers of the "Daily Mirror" and "Daily Graphic" were published with page pictures, beautifully retouched. The pictures even appeared coloured on cigarette cards!

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Another First World War Nurse Cavell “scoop” was that of my securing the first and only photographs of that famous British woman martyr, Nurse Edith Cavell, who was, as my readers will well remember, brutally shot as a spy by the Germans in Brussels. I was the only person who realised that Nurse Cavell’s sister, who recently passed away, was in charge of the Withernsea Convalescent Home and it was quite possible that this lady might have some pictures of her dead sister. The home, I knew, was situated near the station at Withernsea on the East Yorkshire coast. I took the first train, arriving with the newspapers, the milk and the mail. I was very fortunate, borrowing several old originals taken by a Belgian friend of Nurse Cavell who was seen with her dog. Another showed her in the centre of a group of probationers. There was just time to catch the train. I jumped into the guard’s van, breathless and somewhat excited. These pictures were published all over the wide world and sold extensively “right round the ring,” as I used to say about a good picture.

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O Graphic in Court! At one time, court trials had to be photographed surreptitiously at the risk of the cameraman being held for alleged contempt of court. Yes, in my younger days, I have done my share of this "game" with my O Graphic camera which was operated through a hole in the crown of my bowler hat, one that I kept specially for the purpose. Nowadays, I believe, photography in, or in the vicinity of the courts, is more or less totally prohibited. Editors, to steer clear of trouble, publish pictures that have apparently not been taken in any specified place and are content to describe the photograph as "Yesterday's picture of 'So-and-So.'" I have taken pictures of alleged murderers, also murder gangs (including the notorious "Silver Hatchet Gang") a distraught mother who drowned her young children in a bath, and so on. Some received long sentences of imprisonment, others were ordered to be detained at His Majesty's pleasure. No photographer liked taking court photographs. Competition and the fear of a "miss" were the reasons why it had to be done.

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Do any of my readers remember brilliant, famous *The late Sir Mark Sykes* Sir Mark Sykes, son of Sir Tatton Sykes, of Sledmere? I have, in my files, many negatives of that great personality, soldier and politician. One shows him electioneering in Central Hull. During the First World War, he formed a battalion of his own wagoners from his Sledmere Estate. His funeral, after his death in Paris, was picturesque.

I was the only photographer out of many present who was able to take pictures of the scenes at the actual graveside. Without being guilty of bad taste, in any way, I obtained, with my unobtrusive O Graphic interesting incidents of the picturesque Roman Catholic ceremony.

In 1914, I photographed *Kitchener's Army* in the making on the Hull Fair ground where Major W. H. Carver, businessman, a lone figure on horseback, commanded the Commercial (Pals') Battalion of clerks, who, for want of equipment, just drilled, in the blazing summer heat, in their shirtsleeves, armed with sticks for rifles. They eventually, however, beat the German hordes.

“Queen of the Air” Amy Johnson, intrepid Hull airwoman, who caused a world-wide sensation by flying alone to Australia, was photographed by my Graflex as a little girl, munching cake at her grandfather’s golden wedding celebrations which I covered for the “Sunday Pictorial.” When she first announced her intended flight, she met with no help financially and it is a fact that at Hedon æro-drome I had to “borrow” somebody else’s plane to use as a background to photograph her against. “Our Amy,” as my own caption first described her, was given a tremendous reception at Hull on her return. My caption phrase “Our Amy” caught on like wild fire and songs were hurriedly written and sung in praise of wonderful Amy, “Queen of the Air.” London photographers failed to bluff her (like her dad, Amy had a “business head”) and, while courteous to them, she would do anything for me. I drew a cartoon, published at the time, showing the Press photographers “re-discovering” Amy including a comic sketch of “the man who had never heard of Amy.” I caricatured her, too.

bigstuni .com/ed Action football pictures
Football Action were all the rage after the

First World War and I took great interest in the game of photographing the action—much more interesting to me than the football itself. Football photography was fair sport for any Press photographer and no dirty tricks could be played. The most sensational match I ever covered was the one in which Kingston Rovers met the Australians. Little, broadbacked Horder captained the visitors who played lightning Rugby football at Craven Street ground. Craven Park was not opened then. I could not go wrong, incident after incident fell into my hands and I exposed all the plates I carried—16—by the time the whistle went for the first half. I decided to clear off. I printed a big batch and sent them off, “right round the ring” on the 8-40 night mail train. Checking up on the Monday morning, I found my total sales were round about 25, Sometimes I covered as many matches in the two codes as three, on a Saturday afternoon. The “Leeds Mercury” possessed a huge file of my special football pictures in their “library.”

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To the German bombard-
Bombardment of ment of Scarborough, I
Scarborough rushed in a fast wedding
hire car, which, I remember,
being a Yorkshireman, cost £7-10-0 for the
occasion. This enterprise resulted in special
photographs dashed back by me in the hired
car occupying the entire front page in the same
evening's edition of "The Daily Mail" at Hull.
This was an achievement of no mean import-
ance at the time, because the "Mail" could not
engrave its own "blocks," the work being done
by an outside, independent firm of engravers,
City, who, since then, have grown and grown.

By far the greatest fiasco
Mythical North of the First Great War, from
Sea Battle a newspaperman's point of
view, at any rate, was at its
very outset when a big naval battle was thought
to have been fought in the North Sea. Word
reached Hull that hundreds of wounded sailors
were expected to be landed from a hospital ship
at the Riverside Quay. With dozens of fellow
Pressmen—reporters, special correspondents
and cameramen hailing from all over—their

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numbers swelling hourly—I waited, with my Speed Graphic outfit and flashpowder lamp, on the quayside for two or three whole days and nights for the arrival of the hospital ship. Armed with field-glasses, we all scanned the Humber horizon in the darkness, our hopes rising with the appearance of any vessel—even a Goole collier—waiting patiently for the hospital ship that never came and for the pictures and stories that never materialized. For, in spite of the facts that scores of ambulances lined the quayside and that many gallons of beef tea had been prepared in the kitchens at the various hospitals, including the Victoria Hospital for Sick Children, where the young patients were taken from their beds and transferred to other wards to make room for the mythical “wounded” sailors, the whole affair turned out to be “much ado about nothing” and merely a more or less stupid mobilization test on the part of the military authorities. I do believe, however, to quote a popular song, that in such circumstances, there “ought to be a society for the prevention of cruelty to poor, unfortunate” Press photographers and the like.

By using my Graflex, I
The Worn-out stopped that horror—the
Horse Scandal worn-out horse scandal.

Journalistic photographers must not heed threats. I was promised a sound thrashing with a horsewhip when I brought my Graflex into action on the ship which carried the poor, dumb creatures, many of them seasick and dying during the voyage from Hull to Belgium. I was determined to give the nefarious traffic the publicity it deserved so I stuck my ground and secured my pictures, although, strictly speaking, I was trespassing on private property, viz:- the ship and the quayside.

Some of the horses were very lame and emaciated and seemed to sense their fate. That was one Saturday morning. On the following Monday morning my photographs exposing the horrors of this infamous worn-out horse traffic appeared in every morning newspaper, London and Manchester, "right round the ring." Immediately, questions were asked about the scandal in the House of Commons with the happy result that the regulations were at once tightened up and the traffic at least modified.

WATSON ON THE ●

I do not know what goes *Gate-crashing* on nowadays, but in my "*The Times*" younger days "tips" were sometimes offered by perhaps well-meaning persons to Press photographers to try and bribe them in order to "grind an axe." I recall "covering" a wedding of only very minor importance from a news point of view. I was personally acquainted with the bridegroom, otherwise I might not have bothered with such an event. At the reception, the bride's father seemed particularly anxious to see the bride's face in "*The Times*" (London.) I should have been laughed at had I submitted prints of this purely local wedding to that highly influential paper. I tried to explain, but nevertheless, the "persistent pa" who quite rightly had had a little drink on such an auspicious occasion, endeavoured to push half-a-crown into my hand to "do the necessary."

As a matter of fact, I used to contribute photographs to "*The Times*" when the occasion warranted it and have perhaps had six actually used during my whole photographic career, as only the most important pictures could be used.

THAT great actor, Matheson Lang, once sent for me to take a series of special flashlight pictures of "The Chinese Bungalow, a brand-new play, produced for the first time at a Saturday matinee at the old Hull Grand Theatre, now converted into a concrete super cinema. The curtain was due to rise at 2 p.m. so I was there prompt at 1 p.m. I waited patiently, at the ready. From nowhere, Matheson Lang came backstage. I started exposing at twenty minutes to two and, believe it or not, took 16 pictures before the curtain rose. Never have I taken flashlights quicker. The eminent actor, faultlessly and weirdly made up as a Chinaman, to an almost frightening degree, was courtesy itself, saying I had proved myself the quickest photographer he had ever employed. So, in order to please him, I rushed a proof of each photograph into his dressing room at the theatre before the finale, securing more congratulations from the distinguished actor and a thumping good order for 250 publicity prints—worth £20—from his genial manager, Mr. Mayor Cook.

WATSON ON THE ●

**“Under
Arrest!”**

Strange as it may seem, and particularly in war time, a Press photographer found himself “under arrest” now and then, especially if he was insistent in getting what he wanted. Just before the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, in the First World War, His late Majesty King George V officially opened King George Dock at the Third Port of Hull. Two days before the event, H.M.S. Skirmisher, a destroyer, arrived in the Humber, leading a flotilla, to take part in the celebrations. Now it occurred to me that, if I could board her, it might be possible to secure some good advance pictures of the crew preparing to celebrate, etc. I went down to the Pier, where I found a motor pinnace plying between the pier and the ship. No objection was raised when I stepped, with camera outfit, on board the small craft and, on nearing the destroyer, I took it into my head to take a full, general view of the warship, more for stock and record purposes than anything else. I had scarcely lowered my Speed Graphic when there was much shouting aboard the Skirmisher, on nearing which I was escorted

on to the destroyer and, to my amazement, was immediately placed "under arrest." Brought before the Commander, I hastily established my credentials as a member of the Institute of Journalists, with the happy result that I was invited to stay for lunch on board, a suggestion to which I raised no objection. I was only 18, or so then and the glass of champagne, courteously given, almost went to my head. After lunch, I was given carte-blanche so far as taking photographs was concerned. Always a keen opportunist, I was soon up in the crow's-nest "snapping," for my exclusive benefit, practice firing a salute of guns for His Majesty the King.

The result was that I secured these pictures a day ahead of any possible competition and a day before the dock was actually declared open. I got them away overnight to London, in time for the "evenings" and the early editions. Then, in addition, the "main-brace was spliced." The inscription, "The King, God Bless Him," on the rum barrel gave an excellent, topical note to the pictures which resulted in many profitable "sales" to the various London and provincial newspapers and later, to the weeklies.

WATSON ON THE ●

Next day, morning dress was imperative for members of the Press at the opening ceremony at the new dock and for some amazing and extraordinary reason, the most rigid precautions were taken with regard to the Press photographers. No operator was allowed, under penalty of arrest, to get anywhere near His Majesty the King, excepting His Majesty's own personal photographer whose pictures were circulated by Central News. This seemed somewhat unfair to me, but I did not grumble. We "ordinary mortals" were compelled literally to swelter in morning dress and top hats in the June summer heat inside specially-constructed false, hollow pillars, hardly a yard square and fitted with a peep-hole, like the operator's cabin at a cinema and through which, I suppose, I was to poke my Graflex camera. I could stand it no longer, and under penalty of arrest, I left my camera bag inside the false pillar and with my little O Graphic inside my top hat I gradually crept out on the quayside. In less than three minutes, His Majesty King George walked to the edge of the quay, declaring the dock open, enabling me to get two close-ups.

WATSON ON THE ●

When commissioned once
“Squandermania” by a Sunday paper to illus-
trate a special article on
in a City alleged “squandermania”
in the super thoroughfare, Ferensway, at Hull,
a difficulty arose as to how best to get a picture
of the unlet shops in the ultra-modern arcade
composed of splendid chromium-plated ones
They were in darkness and belonged to the
municipality and this alleged wanton waste had
caused a storm of protest by many ratepayers.
It had been civic week and some of the shops
had been temporarily lit. An obliging official
switched on all the lights on at my request. I
fixed up my tripod and secured two time ex-
posures of the ultra-modern shops. Inside a
stored street orderly boy’s cart in a corner was
a cat licking her kittens—the arcade had been
in darkness. Seeing me flashlight the family,
the official became slightly suspicious and he
finally asked me why and for whom the photo-
graphs were being taken. I simply replied “Oh!
For the department, old man!” He seemed to
be satisfied, but he did not and still does not
realise I referred to the editorial department.

WATSON ON THE ●

The Ubiquitous Camera at Dinners Nowadays, more than ever, the ubiquitous camera perhaps goes too far when Press photographers take pictures of important guests engaged in private actions at dinners. Such pictures are usually taken with a miniature camera, fitted with an ultra-fast lens. Most notabilities have given up objecting to this practice, regarding it as a joke, but once Mr. Sinclair Lewis, the novelist, created a sensation at a New York dinner given to Nobel prize-winners. He explained that he walked out because he objected to being photographed with his mouth open! The distinguished company present at this New York banquet, which marked the centenary of Nobel's birth, was astonished when Mr. Lewis rose and stalked angrily out of the room. It took twenty minutes' pleading on the part of the executive and directors of world peace organizations to induce Mr. Lewis to return. On resuming his seat, the novelist declined to accept the Press photographers' apologies, and declared that anyone should be protected when taking soup.

It was, perhaps, curious
“Winnie” & that Mr. Winston Churchill
the Candidman (so very popular to-day)
should attack candid Press
photographers. He once wrote an article in
“The Times” (London) condemning candid
photography. His words were followed by two
letters to the Editor of the “Times,” one from
Lord Southborough and the other from Lord
Monsell. The former wrote :- “Mr. Winston
Churchill does well to find time to condemn
the photographer who lies in wait to take a
picture of the oyster or the caviare as it passes
into the interior of some distinguished politic-
ian.” He might have expostulated even more
at the appearance, some days later, of another
picture, captioned “Tears at a Funeral.” This
abomination savours of the present day, but it
is interesting to look back and find the embryo.
At the International Congress, way back in 1895,
the then Prince of Wales (who presided) beck-
oned over to the secretary and said, “There’s a
man up in the gallery with a camera. Go and
turn him out! Tell him I will not be photo-
graphed while I am blowing my nose!”

Lord Monsell, in his letter, said that he was glad that Mr. Churchill had drawn attention to the growing, and in his opinion, revolting practice of publishing photographs of well-known personalities eating and drinking. His experience of Press photographers had been that they usually sought permission from their prospective victims, which led him to think that the evil was due, not only to the photographers, but to a certain number of people who apparently craved to see their pictures in the papers even under conditions most unflattering to themselves. Surely, I think, the point of all this "candid" business is that these big personages should, in their own interests, behave with perfect decorum. Personally, I refused to waste my time and costly films or plates and flashbulbs to record the personal conduct of a more or less decadent school of personages. I would, as a member of the older school of Press photographers, rather pursue the much greater pleasures to be derived from creating human interest feature pictures, child studies, etc.

WATSON ON THE ●

Only on three or four
“Snapping” occasions have I taken
“Winnie” Mr. Winston Churchill.

He once came to South-West Hull to help Mr. Richard Law, then a brilliant and promising young Conservative candidate for Parliament. Fishermen were lined up at the Fishermens’ memorial commemorating the famous Russian Outrage ready to greet the distinguished visitor. Although there was a gale and my flashpowder was being rapidly blown away, off the lamp, I secured my pictures.

“Winnie” came to Hull during the Second World War when I “snapped” him giving the usual V-sign and smoking the inevitable cigar. When Mr. Churchill visited Leeds, some time later, I got a good “general” picture from a high window of the tremendous crowd. This was used right across the page of the evening paper. The other occasion I “snapped” this ever-popular statesman was at Halifax, during the immediate post-war election campaign. I could hardly see Mr. Churchill’s chubby, beaming face from the ground level for microphones obliterating the view, but I got my photographs.

WATSON ON THE ●

At the Central Hull
Too Generous election petition in which
M.P.? Sir Henry Seymour King,
M.P. was the subject of
criticism for being too “liberal” a Conservative
and, perhaps too Christian by giving away bags
of coal to the Irish poor in his constituency, I
was not lucky enough to be on the spot when
a foolish and ill-advised onlooker threw a piece
of coal (for a memento it was later argued in
defence) at the two two judges, Bucknill and
Ridley. This was real news and was given much
greater prominence than the day’s proceedings.
“Judges Stoned” read the head-lines. The
hearing of the petition took place in the Sess-
ions court and the jury-box was packed with
reporters. There was an imposing array of
counsel who all came down from London on
the same train and back on another when the
proceedings ended. I smuggled a camera into
court, as a “copy” messenger, but I was given
away by a reporter on a rival paper. Warned, I
left the court. I exclusively “snapped” both
judges playing golf at the week-end. This was
permissible and amply compensated me.

*England's
Oldest Race
Meeting* That "hardy annual," Kiplingcotes Races, became a favourite subject if not an obsession among some Press photographers. I used to motor out to the Yorkshire Wolds regularly to cover the event, but I finally dropped it as there were too many on the job to make it profitable. The race is reputed to have taken place every year since 1519 and after 1664 has been run on the same course. More often than not, the second horse wins more prize money than the one that comes in first and, it is recorded, that once the winner received only £10, while the runner-up secured £56 in prize money. Truly it is an amazing event. The course is situated in an isolated part of the Yorkshire Wold country and there are no elaborate preparations about the affair. No "card" is published and there is always an element of mystery and speculation as to whom the competitors will be. First past the post secures the interest on £464 invested in Consols and the second takes the entrance fees at £4 each of all the horses entered. More and more photographers come each year.

WATSON ON THE ●

*Pictorial
Exposure of
Scandals* Before the Cenotaph at Hull was completed, there was, I noticed, a large cavity there, water-logged in the shape of a cross. Although it was consecrated ground—I was there when Dr. Gurdon, then Bishop of Hull consecrated it,—the trench became a dumping place for rubbish. Deciding this scandal should be at once exposed, I got a citizen to hold up a long pole, Chinese fashion, showing dirty articles of clothing, battered women's corsets, pairs of wheels, tin cans, etc. My picture was given a prominent position in the local paper above a specially-written caption. Crowds came from all over to see for themselves. The publicity did good and first thing next morning a special gang of Corporation workmen from the City Engineer's department arrived at the scene and after putting a morning in, cleaned up the site, putting an end to the disgraceful scandal. For all I knew, somebody might have got into a row about the matter, and I hoped they did, because as an old Royal Flying Corps man, it was enough to make one's "blood boil."

In Charles Street, Hull, the cheapest spot in the city
The Deaf and for food, it was an offence
Dumb for any of the many barrow-
Barrow-boy boys to halt except to serve,
and then only for a brief period. The police
were exceptionally keen in watching these
enterprising, self-employed harassed individuals.
One young, inexperienced, over zealous police-
man accused, in the police-court, witness-box,
one of the barrow-boys of using obscene lang-
uage when the officer told him he would be re-
ported. Mr. Quinn, superintendent of the
Deaf and Dumb Institute, spoke up for the
young salesman and proved that he was in point
a totally afflicted mute, making it impossible for
him to use the language complained of. The
officer had been badly at fault in mistaking the
mute's mutterings for obscene language. I
went down to the poor boy's humble home and
got his barrow out of a shanty. This we load-
ed up with apples and pears, scales. etc. His
mother threw her arms round her mute son's
neck and I got the human interest picture that I
wanted. Publicity cuts both ways, no doubt.

Dutch Airlines once staged a Press publicity "show" at Hedon aerodrome, near Hull, the property of the Hull Corporation, although it is part of the East Riding. The organization did not do things by halves and must have systematically invited every newspaper and agency in Fleet Street to cover the inauguration of a new service. Many of the editors and news agency chiefs re-directed these permits on to me to cover for them. I had a veritable "nap-hand" of tickets of one sort and another including tickets to get in, tickets for cars, tickets for the enclosure, tickets for everything. All went well until some meddling minor official bawled out on the loud-speaker, "All reporters and photographers out of the enclosure; hurry along please!" Naturally the Pressmen ignored this. The East Riding police, who although on duty by request of Dutch Airlines had no jurisdiction over the Hull Corporation aerodrome, lost their heads and began bundling and pushing the Pressmen about. This was greatly resented. Result : no publicity of any kind!

WATSON ON THE A ●

It has been said that "Brainwaves" as there are more "crack-pots" walking about than News those confined in asylums. A certain chief constable became obsessed with a more or less mad idea which related to fixing wireless apparatus on mounted police horses. I thought it crazy, but, thinking that it was worth trying, I made arrangements to cover it. I pictured an ærial attached to dobbin's tail! Whether this attachment was irritating from an equine point of view, I cannot say, but the resultant series of pictures of the "stunt" sold very readily to the American Press on the old principle that the Yankees will try anything once. Being a cartoonist as well as a photographer, I dashed off a comic sketch of the outfit and this caused a laugh on the other side of the Atlantic, too. So that everything is grist to the mill of the keen and enterprising freelance photographer, especially if the subject is at all novel. The difficulty is determining whether the subject is, or is not too ridiculous to warrant the use of costly photographic material upon it. So, beware of "stunts!"

Sometimes it is difficult "News" & Pure for even an experienced "Bilge!" journalistic photographer to know and differentiate between "news" and pure "bilge." An example of this was furnished by an item which started in the police-court, before "Mac" (Mr. J. R. Macdonald, the Stipendiary Magistrate. The point arose as to whether a baby in a pushcart pushed by his mother, was or was not a pedestrian. I decided that this was most certainly "news," and, while they were still arguing in the court, I traced the child down to one of the poorer parts of Hull—Barmston Street to be precise—and found the baby, covered with mud, playing with other kiddies in the notorious Barmston drain in which many a youngster has been drowned and been the subject of an inquest. Mother quickly washed the baby and we put him in the pushcart. Now that the dirt had been removed, I "snapped" a rosy-cheeked youngster with curly hair. The upshot was that the picture was used in twenty papers. The reason was that the item was real "news" and would prove interesting to all mothers.

WATSON ON THE

Earl Eustace Percy put up
Lord Percy & for Central Hull against the
“Jim” Hon. J. M. Kenworthy (now
Kenworthy Lord Strabolgi) who was then
a Liberal. I received a wire
from the “Daily Mirror” instructing me to
feature both candidates. The earl, one of the
Northumberlands, proved helpful and so was
the ex-champion boxer of the Navy, Kenworthy.
Lady Percy, a very tall person, was photograph-
ed by me being presented with a sprig of white
heather for luck by a well-known celebrity,
known as “Nulli Secundus,” Mr. Horatio
Marshall, a successful caterer. Earl Percy,
according to gossip, lost the election through
a penny clay pipe which he pretended to smoke
like any workingman, in a Press photograph.
Going down to the East Hull gasworks, I took
the aristocratic earl candidate in the centre of a
jolly line of very buxom overalled and trousered
female workers. This appeared in the “Daily
Sketch” above the caption, “Earl and the Gas
Girls.” This picture caused a lot of good-
natured fun, but I do not think it had any effect
on the result of the Central Hull contest.

WATSON ON THE A ●

Later, before Kenworthy Asquith & Kenworthy left the Liberal party to join the ranks of Labour, I took a flashlight at a big meeting at the Hull City Hall showing Kenworthy and Lord Asquith on the platform together. Then Kenworthy fought the next election on a sick-bed, suffering from appendicitis, and won.

The white heather oracle proved lucky all right for another Conservative candidate for Central Hull, Captain Basil Barton, at another election. Having purchased twopennyworth of lucky white heather from a black-bearded old tramp peddler in my favourite "pub," Ye Olde White Harte, I persuaded one of a large group of postmen to present the lucky sprig to the candidate, a solicitor. Wearing the lucky emblem in his button-hole, he appeared in a case in the police-court where the reporters spotted the change from Captain Barton's usual rose. Almost before I could get my own brain-child pictures away to London and Manchester, I was bombarded with telegrams from numerous art editors demanding pictures of the candidate wearing lucky white heather. News travels fast!

Calling daily for a browse round Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son's bookstall where I liked to have a free look at the papers before finally purchasing, I noticed a fat-faced jolly-looking man asking for the "Christian Herald." I took very little notice of the incident until it was repeated daily. It crossed my mind that this pleasant mannered man must be either a very devout Christian or some religious maniac. Why, on earth, did he purchase a weekly paper every day? It was no concern of mine, however. One day, I found myself sitting next to my religious customer in a bus. So I tackled him, asking him why he was so fond of buying the "Christian Herald." He quickly disillusioned me by informing me that it was the "Daily Herald" he actually purchased and the bookstall manager was familiar with the joke. He got it for the racing tips which, he said, were very good, indeed! The whole thing was merely a joke, indulged in daily to pass the time of day with the newspaper salesman. So do not believe everything you hear in similar circumstances.

The The annual civic process-
Lord Mayor's ion at Hull, known as "Lord
"Do" Mayor's Sunday" used to be
 a bit of a farce or "Mikado."

The police band, as far as I remember, only knew one tune, and headed the motley collection of dignitaries from the Guildhall to the oldest parish church in England—Holy Trinity. To the strains of tum-tee-tum tee-tum-tee-tay, tum-tee-tum, tee-tum-tee-tay, the civic heads, in antiquated garb, would step out, probably on the wrong foot and proceed. One year, the Lord Mayor might be a successful businessman with plenty of money to spend or the office might be filled by a rough Socialist, an artisan who would unhesitatingly accept the £1,000 expenses that went with the year of office. More often than not, it would be raining, drizzling or foggy and the photographers would have to run unceremoniously about, to give "slow-drops" and to keep up with the ever-obliging civic dignitaries, the Stipendiary Magistrate and the County Court Judge, both looking as legal and ashen as the Town Clerk. The hospital nurses, too, would be worth a film.

WATSON ON THE A ●

Free wine was provided in the Lord Mayor's parlour at the Guildhall and the Press were always welcome. Perhaps this was the reason why this particular event was well covered by the newspapermen! One reporter I knew simply went to sample the wine and never went near the procession or the church. He knew the routine off by heart and there was no need for a man of his fertile and remarkable imagination to risk a chill watching the "carry-on" itself.

During the Second Great War, a coloured American soldier, one of the "darkies," waiting for the "pubs" to open, saw the procession and the Lord Mayor in his plumed hat and ermine coat, all too loudly exclaimed: "Well, look who's here! Father Christmas has come to town!" in best Yankee talk amid loud laughter. Most ridiculous of all was the self-designed, untraditional and unhistorical garb worn by the professors at the newly-founded Hull University College. They had a habit of assuming precedence in processions over more historical bodies such as the 4th East Yorkshire regiment.

WATSON ON THE ●

‘GET Parliamentary candidate in dole queue’ ran a wire from the “Daily Mail,” Manchester. Easier said than done, but I determined to carry out the assignment, however distasteful. It was now Wednesday and the first dole queue would be lined up on Friday morning. “Archie” Stark, then unemployed boilermaker, sincere, red-hot Socialist and incidentally pioneer of the free cremation idea, had been nominated in a Hull election. A candidate for Parliament actually “on the dole!” This was “news!” So I went down to see Stark at his home and honestly and candidly told him that I intended to photograph him in Friday’s queue. Seeing my argument that he would receive valuable publicity and sympathy, “Archie” agreed to be on the outside of the column. Everything was OK! Friday came and although I disliked the job, everything went well and there was no free fight. I went off to print my pictures, but “Archie” was in for a surprise. In those days, I believe, Leeds office controlled the Hull one and when Stark put his hand out to receive his “dole,” he was

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politely, but firmly told "Dole" *Stopped!* that his payment had been stopped. The reason given was that the Leeds officials (who had seen my portrait of Stark in the "Leeds Mercury" published prior to the queue picture) had decided that if Stark could afford to put up nomination money as a Parliament candidate, then he was not destitute and was not entitled to financial help. Reports reaching me later, confirmed that Stark was "wild" about the matter and blamed me and the Capitalist Press generally! He was not returned to Parliament but he did become Lord Mayor of Hull and, so far as I know was the only individual to reach that high office, after being in the unemployed ranks.

Incidentally, the printers on the newspaper at Manchester, seeing my photograph on the stone in the composing room took pity on poor Stark, and, generously enough, organized a whip-round, which resulted in £5 being sent to the so-called victim of the unemployment queue affair. This £5 amounted to considerably more than I received for the reproduction of the photograph. What a game it was!

WATSON ON THE ●

A Fire Engine Story Waiting for a bus one afternoon near the Hull Boulevard level crossing, I noticed the gates were closed to road traffic. The 4 o'clock express for Manchester could be heard in the distance when up dashed a fire-engine. I knew that Hull's level crossings were bugbears and that their abolition was desirable, if costly. With this in mind, I whipped out my Speed Graphic ready for an unusual and unrehearsed "shot." A camera on the spot when the notorious gates were holding up a fire engine! "And the Fire Burned!" was my imaginary caption. There was not a second to lose, but the held-up firemen were watching me, instead of looking intent and anxious to get through. Shouting, "Look to your front, boys!" I pulled my trigger.

When the Hull City Council next discussed the hoary but vexed question of the abolition of the notorious traffic-delaying level crossings, I issued my fire engine picture which was both topical and timely to all likely papers and awaited results. Art editors plumped for this special, "newsy" unrehearsed local picture!

WATSON ON THE ●

When a large Hull ware-
"Surgery" work house collapsed, burying
in the alive many workers in tons
Enlarger! of grain, I was soon on the
spot. I had just pictured
a squad of rescuers digging, when a police
superintendent friend said to me, "You've
missed the best picture, Edward!" He told me
that the police surgeon on duty had just per-
formed an operation on the spot and saved a
man's life. I asked the surgeon to pose for a
head and shoulders portrait. This was against
professional etiquette, and only after much
persuasion did he agree to pose and then only
with the police superintendent, the two together.
Later, during printing operations, the police
superintendent was ruthlessly "cut off" in the
enlarger! Some time later, the medical man
was given an award for his conduct and his
portrait went out again to the papers. Soon
after, there was a sudden demand for the police
superintendent's portrait. He was now in the
news, charged with alleged annexation of police
funds! This time, it was the surgeon's turn to
be "cut off" in the enlarger!

WATSON ON THE ●

Pictures Everywhere! It may be asserted that there are pictures everywhere to be secured without any expense, but the journalistic photographer must have a nose for news and be alive to press photographic possibilities.

Passing J a c o m e l l i ' s restaurant, going "around town" in Leeds, in search of pictures, with my Speed Graphic at the ready and my eyes wide open, I ascertained that Ribbentrop, the Nazi leader, used to pass through the swing doors to canvass for champagne orders. I got a waiter, armed with a bottle of "bubbly," to stand outside and point to the swing doors.

Other pictures picked up interested women and I "egged on" a gang of silly creatures to fight for rag remnants in "Tatters market." I got a lot of excellent facial expressions. Then there were crazy chorus girls buying dyed and stolen puppies. Can-can girls by night, dog-fanciers by day! An "ærial" of a ferry-boat packed with hundreds of sheep, taken from the top of Hull Pier, made a full-page "Daily Mirror" illustration, successfully sold because of an appropriate insomnia caption.

*Tell-tale
Initials!*

I shuddered when at a Hull railway disaster, taking pictures of the victims on stretchers. I noticed the initials "E.W.L." those of the Editor-in-Chief, Mr. E. Wills Lewis, on an attache case placed at the foot of a stretcher as it was carried past me. One of the colliding trains had left Hornsea, where my chief resided, and I could not get it out of my poor head that the worst had happened. When I got back to the office of the paper with my disaster pictures, after being threatened with arrest for alleged trespassing and not helping with the wounded by the railway police, I knocked on the door of the room of the Editor-in-Chief. Mr. Lewis opened the door himself and, bidding me enter, initialled the whole of my "stuff" for a full-page "spread" and I breathed again!

One of the best of these pictures depicted a railway gang, working like hell, in the act of smashing a hole with umpteen crowbars in the adjoining naval hospital wall to let the injured be carried, with greater expedition, through to the wards of the nearby hospital.

Hounds at a Funeral The most unusual and picturesque funeral I ever photographed was that of the late Capt. Clive Wilson, sportsman and favourite son of Mrs. Arthur Wilson, of famous Tranby Croft. He was a brother of popular Capt. Stanley Wilson, M.P. and Major Guy Wilson. Hounds of the Holderness Hunt, of which the deceased was master, followed him to the grave and assembled in an adjoining field to the family vault. Capt. Clive's favourite hunter followed the cortege, but the best picture was when the huntsmen, surrounded by hounds, doffed caps as the coffin was lowered into the vault. Unfortunately for me, the field was a ploughed one and, determined to get the striking farewell scene, I had to flounder about with six inches of wet soil on my shoes. Hounds all jumped up at me on their hind legs, mistaking me for their master for I was of similar build. The huntsman cracked his whip, bringing the pack into position again, and I secured the picture (later widely published) just in time and as the words of committal were being pronounced by the clergyman.

WATSON ON THE ●

I always succeeded in finding something new or novel at famous Hull Fair. I was the originator of many ideas which have since been copied or repeated. I started the alfresco washing-day picture showing caravan-dwellers performing with rubber wringers and dollytubs in the open air. One of my best-sellers showed a little girl of three in a charming tiny bonnet. Noticing "Queen Mary," a massive traction engine, I got little Anne to look up awe-inspired in wonder at the engine. The apt caption read : "So that's what makes Hull Fair go round, mummy, is it?"

Another year, I "snapped" a crying child in a fatherly, laughing policeman's arms. I borrowed a huge Pip, Squeak and Wilfrid and the comforted child hugged the toy. A snappy caption, "Lost—me and Wilfrid!" ensured a picture which sold "right round the ring." I never took parsons in barrels, lord mayors on roundabouts, fat ladies, freaks, monstrosities or any stereotyped subjects, all played out. On the contrary, I kept a watchful eye open for a really interesting side-light on the whirligig.

WATSON ON THE ●

County Cricket Yorkshire cricket team always came to Anlaby-road at Hull to play against other county teams. More often than not it rained, but the "regular" supporters were always there. One such enthusiast was the late "Father" Baker, Vicar of S. Silas's Parish Church. He was an outspoken parson if ever there was one and once referred to the Wesleyan King's Hall mission hall as being the mecca of the "Gospel of the Tip-up Seats." He hated publicity. To oblige a friend, who was perhaps the clergyman's greatest admirer, I took on a wager that I would secure one day a "snap" of the reticent parson. I noticed him in the front row at the Yorkshire cricket match and boldly and openly photographed "Father" Baker, who rewarded me with a happy smile. I won my bet. This keen sportsman also went to football matches and at one of these he asked me to lend him five "bob" to get in with. It was, indeed, an honour to lend such a distinguished member of the Cloth such a trifling sum. He had left his wallet at home. Carrying my camera bag, he passed through the Press gate.

Another regular visitor *Stunting with the Rain!* was little old Joe Aaron, a Hebrew money-lender, who very obligingly posed with a huge, striped golf umbrella, discussing the play prospects with the umpires in the downpour. Wilfrid Rhodes and that famous pair, Holmes and Sutcliffe and such well-known cricketers as the Hon. F. S. Jackson, Emmet Robinson and many others have faced my lenses. I once had to picture Sellers, Yorkshire's captain, congratulating Leyland on making the innings of his career. Hedley Verity, that splendid Yorkshire cricketer, was kind enough to pose for me at the little local village cricket club's whist drive. He came specially from his home near Leeds and was in Army uniform, on leave. Shortly afterwards, he was killed in action after gloriously leading his men on another field, that of battle. Soon afterwards, when at Bradford, the Yorkshiremen stood in silence in reverence. I was there and at half a minutes' intimation took the two lines of players, headed by "Bill" Bowes. I also used to take many official groups of the various county teams and even women players.

WATSON ON THE ●

These reminiscences *Photographs of* would not be complete *The Dance* without mention of the splendid, artistic photographs I produced with the hearty co-operation of Madame Sharrah's Hull School of Music. Her daughter, Miss Phyllis Sharrah, repeatedly and untiringly helped me with her hard-working and talented pupils, the cleverest in the city, to maintain a constant supply of light, topical feature studies. The majority of these were taken in the open air, on location, of such subjects as Springtime, Autumn or the Spirit of Amy Johnson. Miss Sharrah, though handicapped without Hollywood properties, generally "made do" with remarkable results. Sometimes, the pupils, of whom the leading one was Miss Marjorie Thompson (who later married a South African doctor) would almost catch pneumonia by the photographic rites were performed, but all worked hard and co-operated splendidly. The result was that their school received an amazing amount of free, but well deserved publicity. Miss Sharrah kept a huge scrapbook, eight inches thick, with all

***“Panto” Kids
Rehearsing in
Heat Wave!***

the newspaper reproductions of my photographs pasted in pages. The school trained Christmas pantomime fairies and I used to arrange these “kids” in a wide semi-circle in a garden, busy rehearsing with open mouths, their song parts in hand before them. This photograph was generally enacted in an August heat-wave and art editors seized upon these industrious “kids” preparing for Christmas “pantos” under such sweltering conditions.

The school had a long roll of names of those pupils who had made good in life. These included a former fairy, Miss Dorothy Mackaill, who became a Zeigfield Follies girl in Paris and finally a great silent film star. Her father used to pat butter with alacrity in the Maypole tea shop in King Edward Street, of which he was the manager. I later pictured Mr. Mackaill at the counter of his own little grocery shop at Anlaby, near Hull, worshipping a handful of 12 x 10 “stills” of his successful daughter, Dorothy, taken by an ace Hollywood top-notch studio photographer.

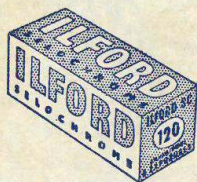
My Ideal Newspaper.



IN CONCLUSION, let us visualize the ideal newspaper, as it appears to me at any rate. A paper must be modern, bringing to the responsible readers of the nation a responsible newspaper, prizing accuracy above bad taste and sensationalism, fairness above supercilious bias and straight, clean reporting above stylized word-playing. With an editorial notebook wide open for the best in publishing, its pages should sparkle with purpose, vitality and interest. Completely without prejudice and wishful thinking, the photographers and reporters should "cover" events, giving the reader everything of importance—colourful, but never coloured. Just as the cameraman catches the visual impression of a person or action, so should article writers capture the essence of trends and ideas that often should supply the background of the news before it reaches the headlines. Of pictures, let there be a superabundance from all corners of the world, for no one ever grows tired of real news pictures.

EDWARD W. WATSON.

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